

K-196

Thornton Farm, The Wilmer Farm
Near Chestertown
date?

Since 1693 the southern half of Thornton has been in the same family. In 1792, John Brooks bequeathed his plantation (the lower half of Thornton) to his son Philip. He also bequeathed his part of upper Thornton to his son, Thomas.¹ The arrangement changed, however, in 1801 when Philip Brooks, uncle to Philip and Thomas left his part of upper Thornton to Philip, provided that he exchange the land inherited of his father with Thomas, which would in turn reverse the will of their father.² The two sons followed the desires of their uncle, and thus in 1808, Thomas became the owner of lower Thornton.³

It was on the 'home plantation' that Thomas built his new house. By family tradition, the residence had been located close to Morgan Creek, on the western side of the farm, but in actuality Thomas chose a more central location for the site of his new residence. He followed the example of his uncle in that respect and must have used his uncle's house as a prototype as it possesses the same general form and floor plan. (By this time his uncle's house was owned by his brother Philip.) Instead of a wing offset from the main house, as at Philip's house, the service wing is centered on the west gable. Otherwise they were very similar. One small glazed diamond between the attic windows in the east gable is its unique exterior mark of identity.

Inside, the twenty year difference in construction produced a more refined detailing. This is evident from the one room of the interior which

was removed and preserved prior to the devastating 1926 fire. The room was reinstalled in the new home of Philip and Isabel Wilmer at 108 Water Street in Chestertown. Its fireplace has an extraordinary tabernacle overmantel with reeded pilasters and broken pediment. The mantel possesses double-crossette trim with three plinth blocks supporting the shelf. The whole composition is lightly decorated with reeding, gouge and drillwork and a rope molding in the cornice. The work is almost identical to that at the house at Big Fairlee, but the composition is more elaborate. These two houses boast the best Federal period woodwork in the county.

Thomas Brooks died in 1840 without wife or children and willed "the plantation on which I dwell, which was devised to me by my brother Philip in 1809" to his niece and two nephews.⁴ Philip, their father, had died in 1837. With both parts of Thornton going to one family, along with additional acreage that Philip had acquired, it was decided in chancery that Thomas' part of Thornton would go to a niece, Mary A. Brooks who married William B. Wilmer. The deeds formalizing this outcome were recorded in 1862.⁵

William Wilmer died in 1877 leaving everything to his wife, Mary A. Brooks Wilmer who died in 1896. William Blackiston William, Jr. and his wife lived on the farm until her death in 1901. Thereafter, the house was occupied by the Lamb family until 1979 when three generations after Mary A. B. Wilmer, the present owner undertook the restoration and enlargement of the family farmhouse.

1. Wills, Lib. 7, fol. 351.
2. Land Records, Lib. BC 5, fol. 387.
3. Land Records, Lib. BC 5, fol. 433.
4. Wills, Lib. JFB 1, fol. 308.

K-196

5. Land Records, JKH 3, fol. 51-60.
6. Wills, Lib. EC 1, fol. 250.
7. Wills, Lib. TRS 1, fol. 427.

K-196

Phil Wilmer House, Wilmer Farm
Chestertown
Private

Late 18th Century

The Phil Wilmer House closely resembles its neighbor Thornton (K-195) another brick house of the third quarter of the 18th century. This building suffered a fire in the 1920's which destroyed all interior work except one room which had been moved to 108 N. Water Street in Chestertown. The surviving woodwork has reeding on cornice and chairrail and fireplace with reeded tabernacle overmantle.

7 DESCRIPTION**CONDITION**

☐ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Wilmer Farm house is a typical Kent County late 18th century brick structure, five bays long, one bay deep, two and one-half stories tall with "A" roof, and a one and one-half story brick kitchen wing off the west gable. There is a quarter round molded brick water table on all sides. The south facade is laid in Flemish bond while the other sides are laid in common bond. On the east gable between the two attic windows is a diamond of glazed headers. A huge chimney is located in each gable and a smaller one on the kitchen wing, where the gable has been rebuilt.

The center door has a transom on the south side and none on the north. Modern frames and 6/6 sash throughout are of 20th century date since the entire structure burned in the 1920's. Shutter dogs are still located in the brick walls, but there are no shutters. Two gable dormers light the attic on each side of the roof.

The wing is four bays long and has no water table; the facade is laid in Flemish bond. The door is located in the second bay from the main portion.

The brickwork, water table, size and shape of the chimneys and other details are almost identical to the house on the adjoining farm called "Thornton", (K-195).

When the house was burned and virtually all interior woodwork then in place was destroyed. Fortunately one room of woodwork was moved to 108 N. Water Street in Chestertown before the fire. There is a mantle with tabernacle overmantle, chairrail, and cornice. The woodwork is embellished with bands of reeding and, on the cornice, corbeling beneath the crown mold. The overmantle has a recessed panel flanked by reeded pilasters; the cornice of the overmantle is denticulated. The mantle itself has a rectangular opening with reeded, crossette surround, and a broken, molded shelf. The frieze as three frieze-blocks, all of which are reeded; reeding is also used on the chairrail.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

K-196

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES late 18th century BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Thornton was an early land grant which consisted of 1000 acres lying on the east side of the then navigable Morgan Creek. Toward the end of the 18th century the two houses, now known as Thornton (K-195) and the Phil Wilmer House (K-196) were constructed in the fashion of that time. Except for details they are nearly identical. Both have good woodwork; that at the Phil Wilmer House, however, is more elaborately carved than that at Thornton.

Phil Wilmer was a mayor of Chestertown.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

K-196

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marsha L. Fritz, Consultant, Michael Bourne, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Kent County Historical Society

DATE

Aug., 1977

STREET & NUMBER

Church Alley

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Chestertown

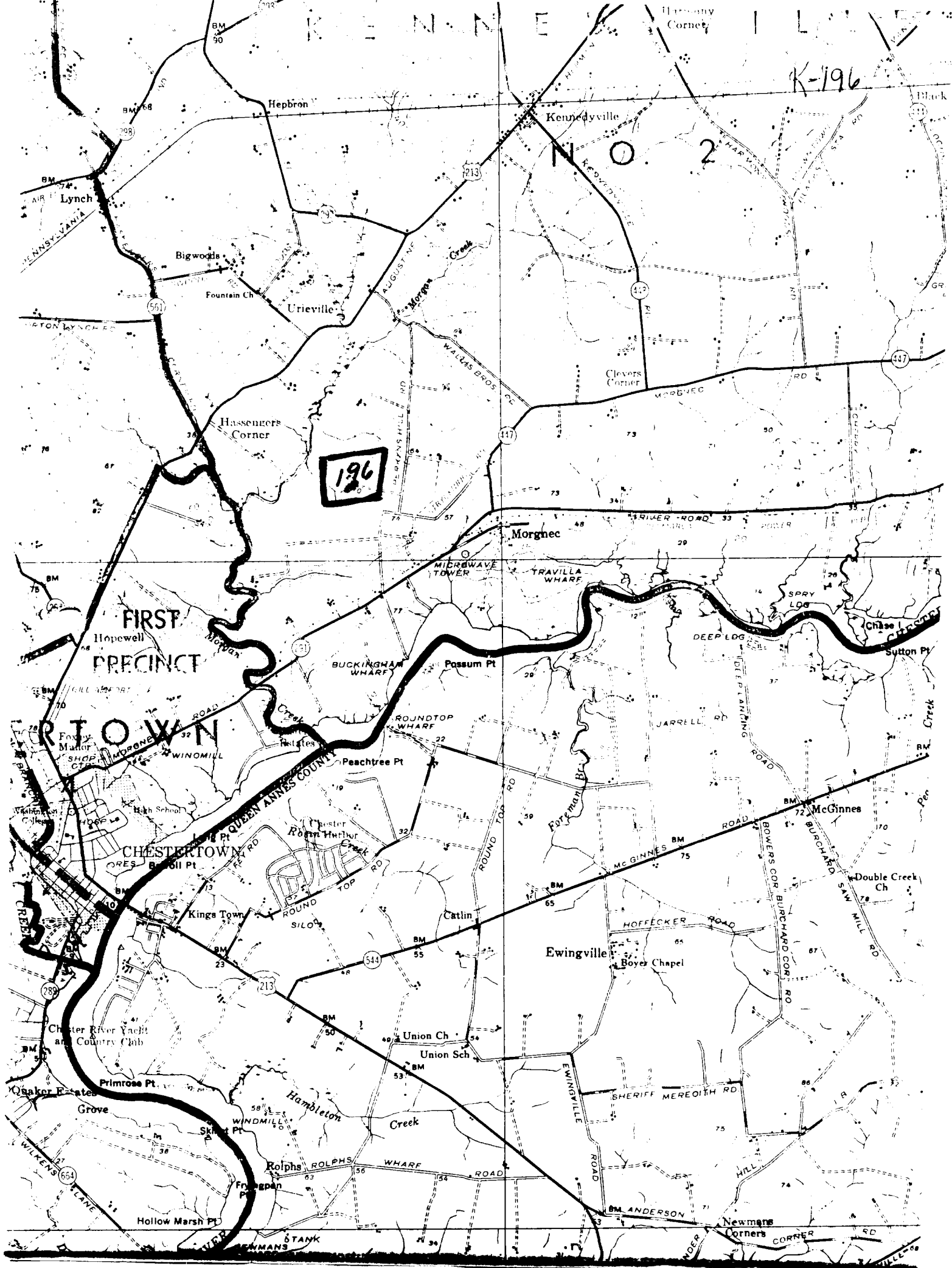
STATE

Maryland 21620

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438





PHIL WILMER HOUSE MHT 196

PERKINS HILL RD. - CHESTERTOWN, MD.

WOOD TRIM REMOVED AND INSTALLED
AT 108 N. WATER ST., CHESTERTOWN, MD.

OVERMANTEL DETAIL

C. ENGSTROM AUG. 1977



K-196

PHIL WILMER HOUSE MHT 196
PERKINS HILL RD - CHESTERTOWN, MD

WOOD TRIM FROM ONE ROOM REMOVED AND
INSTALLED AT 108 N. WATER ST., CHESTERTOWN, MD.

MANTEL

C. ENGSTROM AUG 1977



P-196

Phil Wilmer House MAT 196
Perkins Hill Rd. Chestertown Md.

East End.

C. Engstrom

Aug 77



K-196

Phil Wilmer House. M HT 196
Peckins Hill Rd. Cheltenham Md
South Front.
C. Engstrom Aug 1977